

MICHAEL INWOOD

The end of Plato's *Meno**

I BEGIN WITH a summary of the latter part of the *Meno*: Socrates claims to have shown by his questioning of the slave and elicitation of true beliefs from him that it is possible to conduct a similar enquiry into the question 'What is virtue?' Nevertheless he proceeds not to answer that question but rather the different question: 'Is virtue teachable?' He does so by arguing that since virtue is invariably beneficial to its possessor, it must be a sort of knowledge or wisdom; and, since all knowledge is teachable, this entails that virtue is teachable. But then Socrates backtracks and argues that since there are no generally recognised teachers of virtue, virtue cannot be taught, and so virtue cannot be knowledge. It may however be true belief. True belief cannot be taught, since only knowledge can be taught. But, apart from its supposed instability, it is as beneficial as knowledge. So it satisfies the requirement of the earlier argument. The conclusion of that argument should have been not that virtue is knowledge but that it is either knowledge or true belief. Then Socrates concludes that what virtuous people, statesmen such as Themistocles and Pericles have, is true beliefs, granted to them by divine dispensation, *theia moira*.

It is this last conclusion, that virtue is true belief that concerns me. Many scholars now argue that this view –that virtue is true belief– is put forward ironically, that it is not the view of Plato himself and that Plato does not seriously attribute it to Socrates. They argue that in the dialogue Plato has left various clues to hint that Socrates does not mean it seriously.¹ I want to do three things. First, I give an account of what the view is, what it means to say that virtue is true belief. Second, I argue that the view that virtue is true belief is very plausible, that it is at least more plausible than the view that virtue is like geometry. Thirdly, I

* Earlier versions of this paper were given at the Oxford Ancient Philosophy Seminar and at the University of Crete at Rethymnon. I am grateful to both audiences for their comments.

1 See e.g. Wilkes 1994.

challenge the arguments of scholars who say that Plato does not take the view seriously, just ironically.

First, let me outline what I take the view to be. It is complicated by the fact that there are two types or levels of virtue. First, there is the ordinary virtue that ensures that you pay your debts, tell the truth, and so on. The view in question is not concerned with that so much as with the extraordinary virtue of great statesmen. Ordinary unphilosophical Athenians regarded great statesmen as *very good* people. They had no place for the saints, martyrs, and charity workers, whom we might regard as very good, but they had a high regard for skilful politicians. Naturally politicians often break rules at the lower level of virtue. They tell lies, and perhaps even murder their rivals. But so too might saints, martyrs, or charity workers. However, great politicians do have a strange ability to generate true beliefs. Take Themistocles for example. He believed that Athens needed to rely on their fleet to defeat the Persians. He saw a good way of getting this message across – he said that in speaking of ‘wooden walls’, the Delphic oracle meant a fleet. He is even said to have sent a message to Xerxes urging him to attack before the Greek fleet could flee.² How did he think of all that? He did not know, nor did anyone else. He had a mysterious ability to generate such ideas. Few people have this ability – that is why it is regarded as a divine dispensation, which means roughly ‘God knows where it comes from.’ What Themistocles had is not just true beliefs – other people may have those beliefs once Themistocles tells them about it. What he has is the ability to produce true beliefs. True beliefs are teachable. When Themistocles forms a belief, he can tell it to others. What is not teachable, or less obviously teachable, is the ability to come up with true beliefs in the first place. When Themistocles first generates the belief, neither he nor anyone else can know, be sure, that it is true. But afterwards, after the battle has been won, they can see that the belief was true.³

Here it might be objected that even afterwards we cannot be sure that the belief was true. A pacifist or an uncompromising truth-teller might say that Themistocles’s beliefs were false. Or one might think that the Greeks could have beaten the Persians without a fleet or that Xerxes was on his way home in any case. To avoid that complication, I shall mention another case where a person mysteriously comes up with beliefs that are indisputably true: a good sense of direction. Someone with a good sense of direction can, once they have walked through a city, find their way from, say, the cathedral back to the railway station in a manner that is entirely mysterious to someone with a poor sense of direction. When such a person says or believes that ‘the station is that way’,

² These stories are told in the lives of Themistocles by Cornelius Nepos (2 and 4) and by Plutarch (X.2 and XII.4).

³ Cf. Wilkes 1994: 216: “the man who merely believes something without knowing it will, evidently, not know whether his belief is true or false.”

what they say or believe is true, but we cannot yet be sure that it is true. Once we arrive at the station however, we are sure that the belief was true. We would probably say we know the belief was true, though Plato might not: it is only a belief about a particular.⁴ And Plato would be even less willing to say that the person knew it all along, that they recollect it. It is a temporary belief. We cannot say that the person knows the way from the cathedral to the railway station, even in the way that someone might know the way from Athens to Larisa. They do not know the way for long, they forget all about it later, but they have a true belief, a hunch, at the time when it is needed. They cannot say how they do it, they cannot give a rule they followed, such as: 'Do not look at passers-by. Look at street signs.' Looking at street signs is how I find my way back. But it is not how the person with a good sense of direction does it. They do not know how they do it. So naturally they cannot teach me how to do it. Or at least there is reason to suppose that they cannot teach me how to do it. Incidentally, something like a sense of direction is mentioned in Plato's *Philebos*. There it is said that we need less pure forms of knowledge, knowledge of particulars, not only of forms, 'if we are going to be able to find our way home when we want to.'⁵

A good sense of direction generates true beliefs. Can we change these beliefs into knowledge? In a way we can. We now have reliable maps and street signs which enable people with a poor sense of direction to do what the gifted person can do without their help – as long, that is, as one has enough of a sense of direction to turn the map the right way round and orient oneself in accordance with it, to find one's bearings. A map shows you what the good sense of direction did and sets it in the context of the whole town – it is rather like having the whole of Euclid's geometry set out before you, though not so systematic of course and not at all a priori. And it does not show us how people with a good sense of direction find their way. They do not have maps of towns in their minds. Still a map does enable the ungifted to do slowly and with difficulty what the gifted person does with ease.

Let us return to the gift that statesmen have. Could their beliefs be changed into knowledge, even the second-rate sort of knowledge that a map gives us? Great statesmen display their skills in situations with the sort of unpredictable and seemingly random behaviour that chaos theory was devised for. What will happen and what the statesman ought to do may be quite different in what seem to us to be very similar situations. So there are no useful and entirely reliable rules for dealing with such situations. There are rules, but not hard and fast rules – we need discretion or discernment to see when and how to apply them

4 In the *Meno*, though not in other dialogues, Plato seems to allow knowledge of particulars, such as the way from Athens to Larisa (97a9f.).

5 *Philebus* 62a7ff.

and when to depart from them.⁶ In fact the same is true of ordinary, everyday morality. Plato gives an example in the *Republic*.⁷ The general rule is that one should return things one has borrowed. But there are exceptions. One should not return weapons to someone who has become mad in the meantime. That seems clear enough and one can make that into a secondary rule: Do not return a sword you have borrowed from a madman. But we cannot frame plausible rules for every such case. Should I return to a madman his water pistol, paper dart or pea-shooter? The rules are not so refined. So it is natural to think of morality as requiring a sort of sense, similar to a sense of direction. We speak of instilling a sense of right and wrong into a child. That starts with simple rules, such as 'Always return what you borrowed,' but later we come to distinguish somehow or other between the sane and the mad, and between swords and water pistols.

So my conclusion so far is this. The virtue of great politicians cannot be taught. It does of course require some teaching. If Pericles and Themistocles had never received any training in politics, they would not have been great politicians. But teaching alone does not make them virtuous, does not make them great statesmen. We do not know how they do that – it is a sort of *eudoxia*, a gift from the gods.⁸ I say, but Socrates does not, that ordinary everyday virtue cannot be taught in the way geometry is taught, by explicit rules. It too is a sort of *eudoxia*, but not a gift from the gods because almost everyone has it. Somehow or other we teach it, but not in the way geometry is taught. This is the view that I think Plato ought to have held and perhaps did hold.

The opposing view is this. Socrates and Plato do not believe that virtue is *eudoxia*. They think it is knowledge. And because it is knowledge it can be taught. According to Plato, there are two types of teaching, on the one hand, explicit teaching, what we might call 'spoon feeding,' and on the other hand, elenchus, the teaching by question and answer that Socrates practices on Meno. And there are two types of *aretê*. There is firstly, Meno's virtue, virtue as Meno conceives it, the sort of *aretê* that actual statesmen supposedly have, and secondly Socratic virtue, the sort of virtue that Socrates presumably has and which he wants to define. Meno's sort of virtue probably cannot be taught at all, not by elenchus and not by spoon feeding. It cannot be turned into knowledge, because there is

6 Cf. Guicciardini 1965: 42: "It is a great error to speak of the things of this world absolutely and indiscriminately and to deal with them, as it were, by the book. In nearly all things one must make distinctions and exceptions because of the differences in their circumstances. These circumstances are not covered by one and the same rule. Nor can these distinctions and exceptions be found written in books. They must be taught by discretion."

7 *Republic* I, 331c5-9.

8 'Eudoxia' usually means 'good repute, honour'. It occurs at *Meno* 99b11 in the unusual sense of 'good judgement, having or forming good opinions' in contrast to '*epistêmê*'. I am grateful to Lesley Brown for the suggestion that the usual meaning is also in play, the idea being that politicians who exercise good judgement also have, or seek, a good reputation.

no knowledge corresponding to it – presumably that implies that the beliefs it involves are not really true. Socratic virtue can be taught, but only by elenchus, not by spoon feeding. Those who interpret the dialogue in this way advance several reasons for adopting it. I shall expound each of these reasons in turn and then give my reply to it.

The first reason is this: Socrates first argues that virtue is knowledge and so is teachable. He then argues that virtue is not teachable because there are no teachers of it. This second argument is bad, so bad that Plato cannot have expected us to be deceived by it. The proposition that there are no teachers of *aretê* obviously does not entail that *aretê* cannot be taught. Plato himself, in the *Republic*, mentions the case of stereometry, solid geometry, as something that could be taught, is obviously teachable, even though it is not actually taught.⁹ We might object, in the spirit of Plato, that the reason why stereometry is not taught is that we do not much need to know about it, whereas *aretê* is essential and would be taught if it were teachable.¹⁰ But I prefer to rely on the fact that the argument that *aretê* is knowledge and is therefore teachable is also quite bad. In the first place knowledge is not always beneficial. Most knowledge can be misused to one's own disadvantage. I can use my knowledge of chemistry to make bombs that may blow me up. I can use my knowledge to blackmail someone who would rather kill me than pay what I ask. This is related to a point that Plato makes in the *Republic*, that skills may be used for opposite ends.¹¹ More important than this is the fact that even if we accept that *aretê* cannot be used for one's own disadvantage and that it therefore involves knowledge, it still does not follow that *aretê* is teachable, because Socrates has not shown that *aretê* is *only* knowledge, that knowledge is a sufficient condition of *aretê* as well as a necessary condition. For all that Socrates has shown, *aretê* may involve some other element – besides the knowledge that supposedly guarantees its correct use – and this other element may not be teachable. I say this is 'more important', because I think that Plato was aware of it. At 89a3f. Socrates says: *Phronêsin ara phamen aretên einai, êtoi sumpasan ê meros ti*; Sharples translates this as: "Then do we say that excellence [*aretê*] is wisdom, either the whole of wisdom or some part of it?"¹² Sharples agrees that the Greek could equally mean: "Then do we say that excellence [*aretê*] is wisdom, either the whole of excellence or some part of it?" But he adds: "that would wreck Socrates's argument; if wisdom is only a part of excellence, it does not follow that excellence will be teachable,

9 *Republic* VII, 528a9-c8.

10 Socrates stresses the importance of *aretê* at *Meno* 93e6ff., 94c8ff., etc. Ordinary moral decency is important for everyone. It is not, however, essential for everyone to acquire the *aretê* of the great politician, only for the few with a special talent for it.

11 *Republic* I, 333e3-334b5.

12 Sharples 1985: 89. Except where I specify otherwise, I have adopted Sharples's translations of the *Meno*.

for the other parts of excellence might be something which cannot be taught.”¹³ Quite right. But Socrates’s argument is wrecked anyway. Even if Socrates has shown that virtue is knowledge, he has not shown that it is *only* knowledge, nothing but knowledge. Surely it is more to Plato’s credit if he noticed this. As for Sharples’s interpretation, I cannot see the point of Socrates’s saying it. If phronesis is knowledge in general, it is obvious that *aretê* does not involve all knowledge. Someone can be virtuous without knowing chemistry. If phronêsis is specifically practical wisdom, it is, as Sharples says, “difficult to see what part of it would not be required for” *aretê*.¹⁴ So, my conclusion is, Plato indicated some dissatisfaction with the argument that virtue is teachable. The argument that virtue is knowledge is also defective, even if Plato did not indicate this. So we are not entitled to use the deficiency of the argument that virtue is not teachable, in order to sideline the last part of the *Meno*.

The second reason given is this: Socrates has distinguished two types of teaching, spoon feeding and elenchus or more broadly dialectic.¹⁵ Dialectic or elenchus was applied to the slave in order to show that the slave has tacit or implicit knowledge of a geometrical truth and that when he arrives at a true belief about this geometrical truth, he is recollecting it, not learning it for the first time, that he is recovering knowledge that is innate in him. After this episode, recollection is mentioned twice in ways that at first sight do not seem relevant to the argument. At 87 b9, Socrates asks whether virtue is teachable, or more precisely what it needs to be like in order to be teachable. Then he says: “if it is different from or like knowledge, is it teachable or not – or, as we said just now, capable of being recollected; but let it make no difference to us which term we use – so, is it teachable?”¹⁶ Later, when he is describing the way in which true beliefs are ‘tied down’ by an *aitias logismos*, he says that this is recollection.¹⁷ These remarks are sometimes taken as indications by Plato that when we ask whether virtue is teachable we should bear in mind the elenchus teaching that Socrates used on the slave, not just explicit spoon fed teaching. But Socrates does not do this when he considers whether there are any teachers of virtue in Athens. He conspicuously does not consider whether there is anyone who teaches in a Socratic way. So, the argument runs, Socrates is here indicating that the approach to the question whether there are any teachers of virtue is mishandled and that maybe Socrates himself is a teacher of virtue. The view is that, as I said earlier, Socratic virtue can only be taught in a Socratic way, while virtue as *Meno* conceives it cannot be taught in either way.

13 Sharples 1985: 165.

14 Sharples 1985: 165.

15 Wilkes 1994 classifies the argument that virtue is knowledge as dialectic, but not as elenchus, since it is not a refutation.

16 Sharples 1985: 83.

17 *Meno* 97e6-98a5.

I doubt whether this is right, for the following reasons. First, a reference to recollection need not imply a reference to elenchus teaching, question and answer teaching. Let us grant that the slave can reach correct answers under questioning and that this *shows* that the slave is recollecting. Still it does not follow that someone who is spoon-fed is not also recollecting. If someone reaches the right answer by spoon feeding then this does not *show* or prove that they are recollecting, but perhaps they still need to recollect in order to respond to the teaching. Socrates has not shown, and has not attempted to show, that ordinary teaching, spoon feeding, does not also require recollection. To take a simple example. Suppose I have temporarily forgotten someone's name. Then I will likely be able to recollect the name without spoon feeding – picking it out from a list for example. My ability to do that will show that I really knew it all along and am recollecting it. But spoon feeding can also help me to recollect. 'His name is N,' you say. 'Oh, yes. Now I remember.' Of course, even Socrates would balk at claiming that we always recollect people's names. But even in geometry spoon feeding can jog me into what Socrates would regard as recollection. As I read through Euclid's proof of Pythagoras's theorem, the light dawns and I feel I understand what is going on. I do not suppose it is always like that. Proverbially some students get stuck at the pons asinorum (the theorem that the base angles of an isosceles triangle are equal) and cannot understand what it is all about, however often it is explained to them. So, if recollection occurs, and is perhaps even required, in spoon feeding, a reference to recollection need not imply a reference to question and answer teaching.

What I have said also supports another point I have already made – that Socrates does not show, and it does not seem very plausible, that question and answer teaching is more effective than spoon feeding, that Socratic virtue might be taught by elenchus, when it could not be taught explicitly. If spoon feeding can make the light dawn, if it too can provoke recollection and perhaps requires it, then it is hard to see why it is inferior to elenchus. It might be objected that elenchus, and more generally working something out for oneself, guarantees understanding in a way that spoon feeding does not. But why might not spoon feeding impart, or at least provoke, understanding as much as elenchus? Take a simple problem suggested by Vlastos,¹⁸ "Brother and sister have I none, but this man's father is my father's son." It is easy to work this out for oneself, but it is equally easy to get someone to understand it by revealing that this man is the speaker's son and working back from there. Geometry is more complicated. Someone might be good at making rough estimates of geometrical relationships, that, say, the square on the hypotenuse is more or less equal in area to the squares on the other two sides. That's the sort of knowledge, or rather true belief, that Egyptian surveyors and engineers perhaps had – good enough for measuring fields and

¹⁸ Vlastos 1994: 92.

making the corners of their buildings more or less rectangular. This type of skill looks comparable to *aretê*: it would be teachable in some way, though not by question and answer and not to the highest level. The Greeks then turned these true beliefs into knowledge by making them exact truths, not just approximate truths, and showing how they follow logically from a few axioms or postulates. Presumably it is something of this sort that Socrates says he could get the slave to see if he questioned him for long enough. Actually, I doubt whether Socrates could have done that, even though he knew the answer all along. It is fairly easy to show, if not to prove, that the square on the hypotenuse of an *isosceles* right-angled triangle is equal to the squares on the other two sides.¹⁹ The problem is to generalise it to cover all right-angled triangles. Euclid's proof requires extra constructions, which are not at all obvious. If the slave could work out the proof from non-leading questions, questions that do not suggest a particular answer, he would in effect work out the proof for himself. And that is very difficult, easy enough for Euclid and Pascal, but not for the rest of us. There is no rule for discovering the right constructions; it depends on the particular case and the steps it suggests to us. Euclid and Pascal were especially good at spotting what steps a case suggests – rather like people with a good sense of direction or the great statesmen we started out with.²⁰ But even if the proof could be taught to someone by honest elenchus, it is surely easier to teach it in the ordinary way, by what we might call spoon feeding. Incidentally, the teaching of virtue presents a problem that the teaching of geometry does not. Virtue cannot be taught from scratch, entirely by elenchus, since elenchus presupposes a modicum of virtue on the part of its recipient. It presupposes that he responds to questions by answering them, not by punching Socrates on the nose. It presupposes that the slave has been potty-trained, something that is most conveniently undertaken before the recipient is capable of answering questions. So my conclusions here are first that Socrates makes it easy for himself by treating geometry as an established body of knowledge which he already knows, and secondly that he does not show that elenchus, question and answer, is a better way of teaching than spoon feeding. He certainly does not show that knowledge already possessed by the teacher can be better taught by elenchus than by spoon feeding. And if the knowledge is not yet possessed by the teacher, although it obviously cannot be taught by spoon feeding, Socrates has not shown that it can be taught by elenchus.

19 See Euclid 1908, vol.I, 352 and Schopenhauer 1969, vol.I, 73.

20 Cf. Wittgenstein 1979: 116: "There are proofs in connection with which there is a rule for making up similar proofs ... But in Euclid there are no such rules; each proof is a sort of trick." See also Schopenhauer 1969, vol.I, 70: "We are forced by the principle of contradiction to admit that everything demonstrated by Euclid is so, but we do not get to know *why* it is so. We therefore have almost the uncomfortable feeling that we get after a conjuring trick, and in fact most of Euclid's proofs are remarkably like such a trick."

The third consideration adduced in support of the orthodox interpretation is this. Socrates concludes that virtue comes by divine dispensation, 'without intelligence' (*aneu nou*) – 'unless,' he adds in 100a1-3, 'there were some politicians who could also make someone else a politician, etc.'²¹ This is often taken as a reference to Socrates himself, who describes himself in the *Gorgias* as 'the only true practitioner of politics at the present time.'²² But could Socrates teach virtue? Many of his pupils turned out badly – Alcibiades and so on. He did not teach virtue to his own sons. As Aristotle says in the *Rhetoric*, II, 15, 3: 'a previously steadfast stock [often] turns into silliness and stupidity, as in the children of Cimon and Pericles and Socrates.'²³ This is what we might expect, in view of Socrates's profession of ignorance. There is a complication here, since there are, on the face of it, two relevant types of knowledge that Socrates lacks, if his profession is genuine. First there is the knowledge of what *aretê* is, knowing the answer to the question 'What is *aretê*?' Secondly there is the knowledge in which *aretê* consists, assuming that Socrates has shown that *aretê* is a sort of knowledge. What is the relationship between these? Are they the same knowledge or different? It is easy to think of definitions of *aretê* that might be known to someone who is nevertheless quite vicious. If we define it as, say, knowledge of good and evil, I could quite easily know that without having *aretê*. It is the same with geometry. My dictionary defines it as the "mathematics of shapes: the branch of mathematics that is concerned with the properties and relationships of points, lines, angles, curves, surfaces, and solids."²⁴ Knowing that does not make me much of a geometer. And knowing that *aretê* is knowledge of good and evil does not make me much of an *agathos*. I may well know that virtue is knowledge of good and evil without myself knowing what is good and what is evil. But perhaps Plato has in mind some more elaborate definition of virtue that does reveal all the requirements of virtue and knowledge of which therefore might ensure that one is virtuous. Conversely, if someone has the knowledge in which *aretê* consists does this entail that they know what virtue is? If Socrates is virtuous, but does not know what virtue is, then obviously not. But perhaps Socrates is not virtuous or does not think he is. If he really does not know anything, and *aretê* is a sort of knowledge, then he presumably cannot be virtuous. How, then, might these two types of knowledge be acquired or taught? Socrates seems to think that the definition of *aretê* can be taught by elenchus – he makes a start in his argument that *aretê* is a sort of knowledge. There is the

21 *Meno* 100a1-3.

22 *Gorgias* 521d.

23 *Rhetoric* 1390b30-32. In *Memorabilia* 2.2, 1-14, Xenophon records that Socrates rebuked his son, Lamprocles, for petulance and ingratitude towards his mother. (I owe this reference to Vasilis Karasmanis.)

24 *Encarta*® *World English Dictionary* © & (P) 1998-2004 Microsoft Corporation.

difficulty though that if he does not know what virtue is himself, he won't know what questions to ask – the episode with the slave tells us nothing about that. By contrast if he is himself virtuous and virtue is a sort of knowledge, then he has the knowledge in which virtue consists. He should therefore be able to ask the right questions to enable someone else to acquire that knowledge and thus to become virtuous. Assuming, that is, that virtue is like geometry. If it is not, then again the slave episode tells us nothing. Sometimes it is said that virtue, for Socrates, consists in something that does not require much knowledge – just in questioning his own and others' beliefs, regardless of the answers he comes up with. I find that very implausible as an account of what virtue consists in. As far as I know the Marquis de Sade was far more reflective and questioning than Mother Theresa, but he was defective in virtue because he came up with wrong answers.²⁵ The implausibility of it surely tells against attributing it to Plato.

As I said at the beginning, I have argued that the apparent conclusion of the *Meno*, that virtue is *eudoxia*, coming up with good opinions, has much to be said for it. Secondly, I think I've shown that the arguments that this *apparent* conclusion of the *Meno* is not its *real* conclusion are not very compelling. Naturally I am not at all sure what Plato made of it all. That is another possibility – that Plato is the politician who trains other politicians, that Plato has inserted an advertisement for his own Academy. I do not know of any significant politicians trained by him, but at least he had no sons whom he failed to educate properly.²⁶ The *eudoxia* account of virtue conflicts with what Socrates says in other dialogues. But Plato may still have felt that the *eudoxia* account was worth presenting and exploring. Or he may have thought that, even if it is unsatisfactory, the *eudoxia* view is the natural upshot of a certain type of procedure – that of Socrates or that of Plato himself at this stage of his development. At the very least it seems to me implausible that Plato believed all politicians except the Socratically trained philosopher to be uniformly hopeless. Some of them surely have a remarkable skill in handling non-ideal people in non-ideal states – a skill that to judge from his interventions in Sicilian politics Plato lacked. Whether we regard it as knowledge, *eudoxia* or whatever, this skill needs to be accounted for and Plato's

25 Wilkes 1994: 217: "What one must not do with beliefs, true or false, is to rest content with them and leave them unexamined: the demand to persist and either convert them into knowledge or dismiss them as false is a demand imposed by *aretê* itself"; 218: "If indeed *aretê* is the attempt to scrutinize the beliefs one holds in order to arrive at better ones, then, paradoxically enough, *Meno* is more likely to learn *aretê* if he is left with an unsatisfactory false belief than if he were left with a true belief that he mistakes for knowledge." These claims do not imply that de Sade was entirely virtuous, because he did not, presumably, "convert his beliefs into knowledge or dismiss them as false." But they do imply that he satisfied one necessary condition for *aretê* that Mother Theresa probably did not satisfy.

26 See Trampedach 1994 for an account of the political careers of members of Plato's Academy.

Meno may be an attempt to do so. This seems to me reasonable – philosophers should acknowledge that non-philosophers often have valuable skills.



Michael Inwood

Trinity College
University of Oxford
Oxford, England
michael.inwood@trinity.ox.ac.uk

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ΜΑΪΚΑ ΙΝΓΟΥΝΤ

Το τέλος του πλατωνικού *Μένωνα*

Περίληψη

Η ΠΑΡΟΥΣΑ μελέτη στοχεύει στο να υποστηρίξει –παρά την αντίθετη τάση στη βιβλιογραφία– τη σοβαρότητα της απόψεως που διατυπώνει ο Πλάτων στο τέλος του *Μένωνα*, σύμφωνα με την οποία η αρετή και δη αυτή του πολιτικού είναι ‘αληθής δόξα’ κι όχι ‘επιστήμη’.